attention of the Government had not been pointedly drawn to the irregularities in the matter of appointments and promotions made by officers just previous to their retirement. The Trivandrum water supply scheme had been engaging the attention of the Government for a long time past, but it had not yet materialised. A huge sum had already been spent on the investigation of the scheme. All the above were due to not following up the policy of one Dewan by his successors and the inability of a single individual to devote adequate attention to all departments. The Dewan had to take up the responsibility for the faults committed by the Heads of Departments. The officers themselves had no time to look into details. They were not responsible to the people and did not enjoy the confidence of the latter. The only way to get over the difficulties pointed out was the creation of an Executive Council responsible to the Legislative Council and the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly. The people were not a little benefited by the commutation of the *Kandukrishi* rent into money payments. They were also glad of the proposed railway extension to the Trivandrum town. Side by side with such benefits, they also wished to have an Executive Council during the term of office of the existing Dewan so that his name might be fondly cherished by the coming generations.

DEWAN: Mr. Ramakrishna Pillai, I have already made a few observations on the subject: some want responsible Government, some an Executive Council to cure every conceivable sort of evil that may possibly exist or come into being hereafter in Travancore; or else to put some sort of curb upon the activities of the Dewan or even sympathetically to accord him some relief. I do not propose to say very much more upon the subject now. I have practically exhausted all that I had to say on a similar representation last year and on a similar representation earlier in the day to-day. I said once before, the time is not opportune for the establishment of Responsible Government or of an Executive Council; of a Government responsible to an Assembly or a Legislative Council and ultimately responsible to an electorate. For the immediate present, you have to take things as you find them. There are considerations and factors which have a very important bearing upon this proposal of yours which preclude the possibility of the question being taken up for immediate settlement.

194. Reform of the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly.

MR. P. MADHAVAN VAIDYAN (*Member, Nominated*) spoke about the need for reforming the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly. He said that, for the first session of the Assembly, the Government themselves nominated the members while, from the second session onwards, the people were allowed to return the members; but the franchise was given only to those who were paying a land tax of Rs 50. People who paid a land tax of Rs. 50 were the rich men in Travancore, so that the Assembly might be fitly called the Assembly of the "lords" and not the "Popular" Assembly. In spite of this, there was a feeling gaining ground that the Assembly was an ineffective body when compared with the Legislative Council. It was necessary to dispel that feeling by reforming the Assembly in a suitable manner. The age of the Assembly was 23, the average age of an Indian. It was regrettable that, during the space of a generation, the Assembly had remained as it was first organised, although the Legislative Council was reorganised twice during the same period and the franchise for the latter was also revised thrice. The power of election to the Council was first given to the members of the Assembly, then to those who were paying a land tax of Rs. 10 and still later to those who were paying a tax of Rs. 5. But the franchise for the Assembly had remained the same ever since its inauguration. The need for amending the Assembly Rules was first given expression to by the previous Dewan, Dewan Bahadur Mr. Raghaviah, in his first opening address to the Assembly. A set of draft rules was prepared and published in the *Gazette*, but nothing further was done. There was a certain section of the people who advocated the abolition of the Assembly. But the member pleaded that an institution associated with the name of His Highness the late Maha Raja should not be accorded such a treatment. In British India, there was more than one body entrusted with the administration of the country such as the Legislative Assembly, the Council of State, and the Executive Council. Even though Travancore did not possess as many representative bodies as British India, at least the two existing Houses should be continued and the Assembly reformed without further delay.

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